

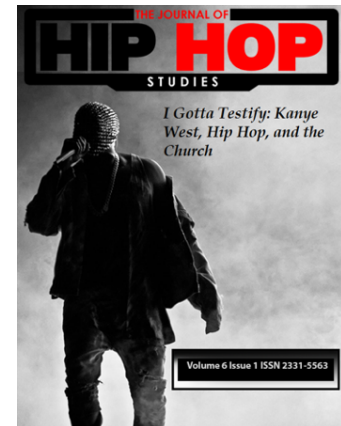
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# Meditation – We Killed Kanye: A Manifesto to the Old Kanye Fans

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*Tari Wariebi*

Dear Old Kanye Fans,

It seems like there are more of us than there are actual Kanye fans. We flood social media and blogs with our provocative opinions on how Kanye has let us down and derailed us from his mission that we were all so avidly and passionately behind.

How did we get here? Who is to blame? Stop right there, I can already hear your responses, Kanye, he got caught up in the fame, lights, started dating Kim and the rest is history. Nope. We let it get here. We let the “old Kanye” die, right before our eyes, and we did nothing.

“Wait, how?” Easy. We missed all the signs.

Kanye, like very few artists to grace this planet, poured his truest and most honest self into his music, his lyrics, his melody conjured up from the soul, an intangible place, and for that very reason, his music hits you. His music hits you, like a warm embrace, like a smile from the heart. But when your art does that, when your music does that, it is no longer just music. Kanye gave us his soul and trusted us to always be attentive and hear everything he shared. He let us in and all he asked for in return was affirmation, and emotional support. We signed up without thinking twice and Kanye told us his proudest moments, his deepest disappointments, his wildest dreams, and his shame-filled struggles. We identified and we let his words fuel our souls. He gave us the gospel.

We are a society of idealist and romantics. We aspire and fantasize about the ideals of life, and because we are humans, flawed creatures, we will never come close to those ideals. In our eyes, Kanye Omari West was never human. He lived those ideals that we dreamed about and read in fiction books. He wore his heart on his sleeve. A young black man fearless enough to immortalize his emotions and personal trials on wax for the world to hear forever, no facade, just sheer honesty, complexities, his shortcomings, his transgression, and his uncertainty.

We idolized Kanye for this; the music reassured us and gave him the affirmation and acceptance that he so desperately sought from us. Then in a terrible turn of events, life hits hard, like it does for most, and in typical Kanye fashion, he came to us and told us everything; it was poetic, beautiful, and clear as day. Some of us stopped listening when he gave us 808s and Heartbreak. “Too weird,” we believed he was not talking to us any more. We were selfish. He had brought us to such a happy place and we could not allow ourselves to be there for him. He never got the overwhelming affirmation that he needed and he continued to spiral. Still talking to us and sharing with us, even going so far as to reshape and retool the music, so just maybe we could see ourselves again like we did and come to his rescue. My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy did not seem too whimsically.

We lost him.

Kanye’s music had become a religion, and we were his disciples. We lived by the words of College Dropout and Late Registration. Kanye was the head of the church. For years, we attended service at the House of Kanye, and just like that, we stopped attending. At that moment, Kanye too had to believe that he was not human, instead a god, that was the best defense to dealing with the betrayal that we, his congregation had set ablaze. Old Kanye fans, spawning left and right, growing rapidly as each subsequent project released. Kanye, growing more and more hardened, and feeding the only thing that he could count on to affirm him, his ego.

It all fell down. Kanye shared with us all his hurt, and showed us, like any human, he could bleed. We let him bleed out. To die is to lose force, strength or active qualities. We had never witnessed a person move with such force and strength as Kanye did, that energy inspired and gave birth to a generation of honest artist.

We killed that energy.